2nd Session, 2nd Parliament, 9 Victoria, 1846.

PETITION

OF

ROBERT F. GOURLAY, presented to the House, on the 19th May, 1846.

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To the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada.

THE PETITION OF ROBERT FLEMING GOURLAY,

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That the Report of a Select Committee of Your Honorable House, in the case of Your Petitioner, in the year 1841, contained a paragraph, as follows:—

"*Your Committee are in possession of proofs, that, during the late Rebellion, when the "Petitioner was resident in the United States, His Excellency Sir Francis Bond Head, then "Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, derived from him the most important intelligence of "the movements of the Brigands, then organizing for an attack on the Province. This, Your "Committee humbly suggest, should be neither overlooked nor forgotten.*"

That, the above was altogether gratuitous on the part of the Committee,—Your Petitioner having solicited nothing of the kind. Yet, as it was laid before the Governor General, by an Address of Your Honorable House, and has won, for your Petitioner, not the slightest consideration, he deems it a duty to himself, as it also is to Your Honorable House, now to refer to it; and, to add, that, conveyance of intelligence to Sir Francis Bond Head was but a very small part of the service which Your Petitioner did to the Provincial Government, while he was residing in the United States. In fact, during six months that he resided in the City of Cleveland, in the State of Ohio, viz: in the month of December, 1837, and five succeeding months, he was daily employed in watching machinations for the invasion of Canada; and did, openly, at many Public Meetings, denounce and discourage every thing tending to this,—undismayed by the scowl of popular fury. That, many, who had part in the Rebellion, came from Canada, expecting the countenance of Your Petitioner, and were much disappointed in finding him opposed to their proceedings, and the interference of American Citizens. That, in fact, while it was in Your Petitioner's power to have banded together an overwhelming force for the Conquest of Canada, he was the most zealous and influential in guarding the Provinces from harm.

Your Petitioner would have been little inclined to set forth these facts, had he not experienced unaccountable neglect, and even marked disrespect, from Governors of Canada, after the departure of Sir Francis Bond Head, viz: from Sir George Arthur, Lord Durham, and Mr. Poulett Thompson. Not only did Sir George Arthur, and Lord Durham, fail to acknowledge Your Petitioner's letters, after he had thrice received thanks from Sir Francis Bond Head; but, on going from Ohio to Quebec,—a distance of seven hundred miles, for no purpose whatever but to communicate, to Lord Durham, matters of—utmost importance to the welfare of Canada, and at a most critical juncture,—he was denied an interview. That, Your Petitioner, on this occasion, abandoned his furniture in Ohio, greatly aggravated disease with which he had been long afflicted, and, was necessarily put to much expence: indeed, moved solely by the purest patriotism, he then brought upon himself an accumulation of distress, from which he can never recover. He is convinced that the august personages, above named, were blinded and deceived by some influences hostile to Your Petitioner, and is therefore more desirous of inquiry into the truth.

He earnestly entreats that Your Honorable House will do him the justice to lay this Petition, by Address, before His Excellency the Governor General, in order that there may be opportunity allowed to substantiate what is above affirmed; and, that Your Petitioner may be compensated for losses sustained in defence of British interests, and in maintaining the peace of Society.

And, as in duty bound, he will ever pray.

ROBERT F. GOURLAY.

Montreal, May 18, 1846